

For Immediate Release January 3, 2006

Contact: Jamie Callahan 1-866-525-5637 or Jennifer Bowman (517) 373-7946

Snow Melt Puts Snowmobile Tour on Ice

LANSING – A legislative snowmobile trip scheduled to begin Wednesday and conclude this Saturday has been postponed due to a lack of snow which prevents use of the trails.

State Sens. Jason Allen and Tony Stamas were planning to head out on the third "Snowmobile the North" tour Wednesday. Unfortunately, warm temperatures combined with recent rainfall melted a great deal of snow, creating impassable snowmobile trails.

"I was really looking forward to beginning the trip this week, but unfortunately Mother Nature had other plans," said Allen, R-Traverse City. "This poor weather makes for a slow start to the snowmobile season, which is extremely unfortunate for the businesses in northern Michigan that rely on tourism dollars spent by snowmobilers."

The tour was scheduled to begin and end in Grayling and would have traveled both the Upper and Lower Peninsulas.

"This thaw is very disappointing," said Stamas, R-Midland. "I was excited about hitting the snowmobile trails and seeing how much snowmobiling affects northern Michigan's economy."

Planned stops for the tour included Gaylord, Lewiston, Atlanta, Onaway, Cheboygan, Mackinaw City, St. Ignace, Cedarville, Pickford, Kinross, Sault Ste. Marie, Paradise, Alanson, and Indian River.

Details on the rescheduled trip will be announced at a later date. The rescheduled trip is anticipated to be shorter, covering fewer destinations, due to the Legislature resuming session next week.

Michigan has more than 6,000 miles of groomed trails offering exciting terrain of forest and field to both residents and visitors. With almost 400,000 registered snowmobiles, contributing more than \$1 billion to the state's economy every year, safe and responsible driving is essential for every enthusiast on a sled.